The Merci Train

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Objectives:
Students will be able to:

a. Build a model boxcar with representations of their treasures inside

b. Determine what three treasures they would place in a boxcar

c. Communicate the reasons for their choices through writing paragraphs

Materials:
- Slide show from the trunk and self-guiding tour booklets
- Historical newspaper articles about the train
- http://www.rypn.org/merci/
- http://www.historynet.com/AmericanHistory/articles/1095_text.htm
- Shoeboxes (1 for each student)
- Construction paper
- Cardboard pieces
- Markers, crayons, etc.
- glue

Introduction:
- Show the slide show that came in the trunk. (This can be done a day or two ahead of teaching this lesson. Specifically point out the Winged Victory Statue.)
- Share information with the class about the Merci Train from the newspaper articles and the internet sites.
- Have the students imagine what treasures they might place on a boxcar and call on a few students to share some of their thoughts orally.

Activity:
- Pass out a shoebox to each student and have him/her begin designing a boxcar. The box needs to sit so that a side is open, allowing others to see what is inside. Instruct the students to use construction paper, cardboard, glue, markers, etc. to make their box look like a train car.
- Once the train cars are complete, the students need to use materials from home to make models of at least three treasures that they would place on a boxcar to be given away. These models must fit in the cars they have created out of their shoeboxes. Display the boxes around the room in an elongated train fashion if possible.
- Instruct the students to describe their treasures and write their reasons for choosing these specific items on paper in paragraph form.

Assessment:
- Collect the writing samples and evaluate spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
- Assess the boxcars for neatness and determine that at least three items are in each one.